

You Know What They Say About History

by storm101

Category: How to Train Your Dragon

Genre: Adventure

Language: English

Characters: Hiccup, Toothless

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2014-07-23 22:34:43

Updated: 2014-08-11 00:54:38

Packaged: 2016-04-26 20:06:47

Rating: K+

Chapters: 5

Words: 14,267

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III hates his history lessons almost as much as he hates his name. There's no way he can live up to the legacy Hiccup Horrendous Haddock I and his Night Fury left behind them. They singlehandedly changed Viking culture, after all, and Hiccup can't even get one tiny dragon to listen to him. /An attempt to reconcile the movies with the books.

1. Chapter 1 (Defunct)

****EDIT, as of August 2, 2014: IMPORTANT NOTICE BEFORE WE BEGIN. I AM USING ALL CAPS TO MAKE SURE YOU, MY DEAR READER, ACTUALLY READ THIS.**

>

****THE REAL STORY STARTS IN CHAPTER THREE. ****

****I REPEAT, THE ACTUAL STORY STARTS IN CHAPTER THREE. CLICK AHEAD, PLEASE. ****

****(For interested parties, there is an explanation in chapter two, but it boils down to this: as I continued the story from the first chapter, it became more and more difficult for me to write. I struggled with the proper portrayal of character, and had a great many difficulties distinguishing between the two Hiccups in the narrative, whether or not they were appropriately characterized. I rewrote the first chapter, what is below, in first person, and carried on from there. I didn't want to delete what had already been posted because it seemed unnecessarily complicated, and I didn't want to start a new story on the website because, again, it seemed unnecessarily complicated. In fact, just attaching the story to what has already been posted and is now just a draft seems unnecessarily complicated as well. Rest assured I would not have put this much effort into both rewriting the chapter and explaining why and posting it as well if I did not believe it to be worth it. I hope my readers will understand and appreciate the effort.) ****

****AGAIN. THIRD CHAPTER IS THE BEGINNING OF THE ACTUAL STORY. I'M SORRY FOR THE CONFUSION. ****

* * *

><p>See end of chapter for notes.

* * *

><p>A smallish Viking with a largish name sat on the floor of the Great Hall, his arms propped on his knees and his chin propped on his hands. Cradled in his lap was a remarkably small dragon, currently fast asleep.<p>

Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, Hope and Heir of the tribe of the Hairy Hooligans, is the hero of our story, though you wouldn't think it to look at him. Everything about him was unremarkable, from his freckled face to his small stature, except for his hair, which was wild and red and rebelled against gravity. His dragon was not much better, as he was remarkably small and didn't have a single tooth.

At the moment, Hiccup was desperately wishing to be in any other lesson but this one. He was best at Sword Fighting, and so it was at the top of the list of "preferred alternatives," but he would even take Frightening Foreigners or Advanced Rudery above this slow torture.

Hairy Hooligan History.

You see, though Vikings are stubborn, rough, crass, and think that Tact and Sensitivity was just the ability to bellow louder than the other person, they do know how to Tell a Tale. To hear them talk about it, they'd invented the whole business. (Hiccup suspected the process had involved a great deal of boredom and even more mead.) Vikings told stories, and what is history but a very long, very detailed story? In fact, Tale Telling was the only Viking activity where being intelligent and articulate was expected, even honored.

But Hiccup was the most un-Viking-like Viking on the Island of Berk. He couldn't lift a hammer. He couldn't swing an axe. He couldn't even throw a bola. And unfortunately his oddities extended even to the one Viking tradition he might have thrived in. He was a clever and curious boy, and would have loved his Hairy Hooligan History lessons, if it weren't for one person.

Hiccup Horrendous Haddock. The greatest Viking Hero to date, and the man the entire Hairy Hooligan tribe admired and strived to emulate. He was the first Viking to have tamed a dragon, the first to touch the sky. He'd brought down fleets, armadas, with his dragon Terror, the last of the Night Furies—the unholy offspring of lightning and death itself, a midnight black dragon the size of a house. The first Hiccup had been six feet tall with shoulders as wide as a tree, a beard as terrible and red as the last drops of lifeblood seeping from a fatal wound, and had a thundering, roaring voice capable of commanding even the most reluctant of dragons. It was said that, when Hiccup Horrendous Haddock spoke, the winds themselves fell silent and obedient. He was the reason why "hiccup" meant "hero."

He was also Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III's great-great-great-great-grandfather, and the bane of his existence. Because Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III was nothing, absolutely nothing like his ancestor and namesake, and he was never, ever allowed to forget it.

"All hope seemed lost," Old Wrinkly continued in a hushed voice. Nine out of ten of the children sitting before him leaned forward, hanging on his every word. Hiccup remained bored. Even Fishlegs, who usually agreed with his opinions about Viking tradition, was enthralled. "Stoick the Great looked Death Itself in the eye and welcomed it. With a shout, he leapt forward, drawing the attention of the massive, huge, monstrous sea dragon before him, desperate to give his village time to flee. When suddenly—" Old Wrinkly slammed his hands together, making every boy in the room jump, and Toothless jolt awake with a whine. "A burst of fire appeared over the monster's right eye, and Hiccup appeared, as if born from smoke and dragon fire himself!"

Hiccup snorted quietly, and ran a few soothing hands over his own dragon's snout, avoiding the bad tempered snapping with expert experience.

"Toothless hungry," the little dragon whined at him. "Give Toothless fish! Now! Now, now, now!"

"Hush," he whispered back. "I can't right now, you know I—" Hiccup yelped loudly, scrambling back in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid Toothless's displeased mouth. His dragon may lack teeth, but he made up for it in very sharp gums and a very strong jaw.

"What on earth—" Old Wrinkly started as the boy fell down, helmet clattering off the floor and adding to the din. The entire class burst into raucous laughter as Hiccup, tears pricking the corners of his eyes, finally got his dragon to let go of his hand. Toothless sniffed and disappeared into the rafters, muttering to himself.

"Hard to believe this Hiccup is descended from that Hiccup," Snotface Snotlout, Hiccup's cousin, sneered. Fireworm, Snotlout's beautiful Monstrous Nightmare, chortled along with him. "He's so Useless he can't even listen to a story properly, let alone train a dragon!"

Hiccup grit his teeth, but didn't say anything. If they could have been learning about any one else, he would have listened, and loved it. If they could have learned about Bork the Bold, who started studying the dragons when Vikings still warred with them, or Skulduggery the Unpleasant, who had founded the Meathead tribe, or Agar the Scream, who had been the first Viking to trap a Whispering Death—any of these would have been better than Hiccup the Dragon Master. Any of them.

Old Wrinkly must have seen something defeated in the boy's face, because he called out across the room, "All right, lads, I think that's enough History for today. Hiccup, walk me back to my house, my old bones could use the help." Still sullen and glum, Hiccup nodded, and started trying to bribe Toothless down from the rafters.

Half an hour gave the room enough time to clean out and Hiccup to convince Toothless to wrap around his shoulders again. Silent and sullen, Hiccup followed his grandfather out of the hall and back to his house.

"Chin up, boy," Old Wrinkly said. "Why, Hiccup the Second had a slow start, tooâ€" "

"Yeah, for ten years," Hiccup muttered under his breath, "and then trained twin Monstrous Nightmares during his dragon training. At the same time."

"Well, I still say you're going to be the greatest hero Berk's ever seen," Old Wrinkly said stubbornly. "I soothsayed it myself. And yourâ€" Toothless Daydreamâ€" (Toothless preened as he was mentioned, then nipped sharply at Hiccup's ear when he didn't join in the praise) "is unique if nothing else."

"Thanks," Hiccup sighed. "I'll see you tomorrow. The last fishing trip should be back in sometime tomorrow afternoon, right?"

"No," Old Wrinkly said ominously. "They've hit a storm, and it's going to take another week." Hiccup rolled his eyes at this attempt at soothsaying. It was bound to be as accurate as Old Wrinkly's other predictions, which had all been wrong. Needless to say, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III did not have very high hopes of living up to his illustrious name.

The fishing expedition's catch would change that.

* * *

><p>Their lessons for the next day had been called off in anticipation of the fleet's return, so Hiccup escaped into the forest around Berk. He spent an extremely productive morning chasing after Toothless, who had gotten it into his scaly little head to steal the remains of his How to Speak Dragonese book and refused to give it back. By the time Hiccup bribed the menace back to ground level, the ships had not only returned to port but had also been unloaded.<p>

"What's that, what's that, what's that?" Toothless chittered in his ear as they returned to Berk proper, bouncing up and down on his shoulder painfully and looking towards the center square. A large crowd had gathered, their size preventing the smaller boy from seeing exactly what was going on. With a sigh (he'd desperately been hoping for just an hour's peace), Hiccup changed direction. Fishlegs, who was almost as small as he was, was standing on tip toe at the edge of the crowd.

"Hey, Fishlegs," Hiccup greeted. His friend had the dubious honor of being even smaller than he was, as well as asthmatic and allergic to reptiles. They had bonded over their shared interest in dragons, their shared adventures, and their shared experience as the communal punching bags of their age group. They also were both named after great Viking heroes of the past with whom they had very, very little in commonâ€"Fishlegs less so, though, as they'd recently discovered that he was a berserker, just like his namesake.

"Hiccup!" he greeted, grinning hugely. "Oh, good, you're just in

timeâ€"you'll never guess what the expedition found."

"What is it?"

"A dragon!"

Hiccup's eyes widened. "What? Really? How?"

"It's in the ice, too much to see easily, but Dogsbreath heard from Snotlout who overheard your dad talkingâ€"they think it's a _Night Fury!_"_

Toothless redoubled his efforts to see over the people around them, and climbed onto Hiccup's head, where he once again began bouncing. _"What's a Night Fury? I want to see! Can I eat one? Are they tasty?"_ Hiccup made a grab for the tiny, troublesome little thing, and missed, as Toothless used his head as a launching board, soaring through the helmets of the surrounding Vikings until Hiccup could no longer see him.

"HICCUP!"

He and Fishlegs winced in unison. That bellow could belong to no one but Stoick the Vast, chief of the Hairy Hooligan tribe, and Hiccup's father. Of course he'd be up next to the ice, and of course that's exactly where Toothless had gone. Hiccup began working his way uncomfortably through the crowd, until he could stand in front of his father.

Stoick's moniker was not unearned. He glowered down above a tangled, bushy red beard, intimidating effect diminished only slightly by the minuscule dragon perched on his helmet. "For the hundredth time, control your dragon!" he snapped. Hiccup nodded, knowing his dragon listened to no one and that it was a losing battle to try. Toothless, made nervous by how loud Stoick could shout, fled back to his shoulder. Stoick huffed, and turned his attention back to the block of ice, speaking quietly with Gobber.

Of course, to a Viking, speaking quietly just meant at a loud enough volume to make your ears hurt, rather than bleed. Hiccup rolled his eyes.

"So you're saying you justâ€" found it?"

"Out on that iceberg, over near the swamps! Yeah, it was just sitting there! Easy as anything to get it onto the boat! Do you really reckon it's a Night Fury?"

"Looks like the stories, don't it?"

"But one hasn't been seen in ages!"

Hiccup blinked. Sitting there. Really? They hadn't had to carve it out, orâ€" or anything? He sidled sideways, keeping one eye on his father and the other on the ice. There weren't any marks on it, at least that he could seeâ€"though to be fair, he kept getting distracted by the dark shape within.

The ice was about twice as big around as Gobber, and about as tall as his father. Tiny air bubbles laced through it, obscuring an easy view

of the shape within. It must have frozen in an instant, Hiccup decided, reaching out to trace fingers over the ice. It was almost definitely a dragon, large and black and curled around something, almost protectively. "Huh," Hiccup said. The end of its tail almost touched its nose, and there was something odd

His shoulder suddenly felt a lot lighter, and Hiccup looked up to see Toothless scrabbling up the ice, only to disappear over the top.

"Toothless!" he hissed. "Get back here!"

"Nuh-uh, nope, Toothless was promised fish and Toothless didn't get fish and Toothless wants to know what Night Fury is."

"It's a type of dragon," Hiccup replied. "Now will you get down?"

"Toothless says . no."

Hiccup groaned, burying his face in his hands. Great. This couldn't possibly get any worse.

And then Toothless shot a small spurt of fire at the ice, scratched at it once, twice, thrice with his claws and it shattered.

Hiccup flung both arms up to shield his face as Toothless squawked indignantly at the sudden destruction of his perch. He flapped back to land on Hiccup's head, muttering under his breath. The crowd of curious Vikings had, for once in their lives, fallen entirely silent, because in the middle of the village square, surrounded by shards of ice was a Night Fury. Jet black and streamlined like all the tales said, the dragon was surprisingly small not even close to the size of Fireworm, Snotlout's Nightmare, and she wasn't fully grown. Its wings were wrapped tightly around itself, so Hiccup couldn't judge the wingspan, but they had to be large. Night Furies were known for their speed and flying ability.

Nobody moved. Nobody breathed. And the Night Fury opened its eyes.

Well, Hiccup thought, that just goes to show what I know. Now things can't get any worse.

With clear intelligence, and without saying a word, the dragon's eyes traced the crowd, matching gazes with Hiccup last. It tilted its head down towards itself, as if checking for something, before crooning in something that sounded, to Hiccup, very much like relief. And then, slowly, it unfurled its wings. And the universe proved that it loved to play tricks, because things got exponentially worse.

Nestled against the Night Fury's chest and clutched protectively in all four paws was a boy.

* * *

><p>Soooo, new fandom. Hi, guys. For those of you who follow for my Godchild fic... I, ah, got distracted by dragons.
(sorry.)

**I saw the new How to Train Your Dragon movie, read some of the books, and decided to try to reconcile the two extremely different

stories. Here's the first chapter of the result! I think (I hope) I got the general idea of what I'm doing across in this first chapter, but if there is still any confusion, let me know! **

**And as always, please read and review. **

2. IMPORTANT AUTHOR'S NOTE PLEASE READ

This is not a chapter, I'm afraid, but there are several important things I need to explain before another chapter goes up.

1) I posted the first chapter of this on a whim to see if the fandom at large had any interest in the story and set up. The response has been pleasant and positive, so I'm going to continue with it. Which brings me to my second point.

2) In the course of writing the next part, I ran into a few logistical problems-expository info dumps and the narrative difficulty of referring to two different characters using the same name. I've figured out how to solve these problems, but it will require rewriting the entirety of the first chapter, making what is posted, well, inapplicable for the most part. Which is kind of confusing as to what I'll do as far as the digital copy of this story is concerned, but meh, I'll figure something out.

3) In all, this means this story is being put on an (extremely temporary, I promise) HIATUS. It will be back. And it will be MUCH BETTER than what I had been considering before, I promise. The story is good-the writing needed some work.

I'm sorry for the confusion, I thank you for your patience and understanding, and if any of this is confusing or needs clarification or ANYTHING, please please please review or leave a PM with any questions and I will answer them. Thank you to the seven people who have already left reviews! I'm glad to see I got your interest. And to those who favorited or followed me and this story, thank you as well.

3. Chapter 1

**Please see the end of chapter for notes. **

* * *

><p>"â€"strode into the killing rink with his head held high, axe slung over his backâ€""<p>

"Wait, I thought he fought with a sword?" Fishlegs interrupted. "A mystical sword that could set itself on fire at his will!"

Old Wrinkly frowned. "Yes, but that's not until later."

"Was he any good with the axe?" Dogsbreath demanded.

"Of course he was, mud-for-brains!" And that was Snotlout. "Hiccup was good at everything! Like, the exact opposite of this Hiccup, who's good at nothing." My cousin shot me a dirty look, which I ignored. "Which is why I'm going to take up his legacy and be the

greatest chief Berk's ever seen!"

Old Wrinkly coughed and tried to regain control of the story. "Now, now, kids. Let's see. Where was I?" "The Nightmare!"

Fishlegs volunteered, leg jittering up and down in his enthusiasm.

"Ah, yes! Hiccup Haddock strode into the killing rink with his head held high, axe slung over his back. A hush fell over his village. They knew they were about to witness something great; though no one could know exactly what that would be."

Well, my grandfather had recovered his stride. I sighed, and tuned him out again. Toothless was curled into my lap, fast asleep, and it would be better for all of us if he stayed that way. I scratched underneath his chin absently.

Gobber the Belch had been tapped to go out on the last fishing trip of the season, and though he thought it would have been an educational experience to drag us kids along, my dad had vetoed it at the last minute. We needed as much fish as possible, and teaching ten adolescents the proper Viking way to fish was a distraction that could lead to disaster. Which meant we had a substitute teacher, and that was Old Wrinkly.

I couldn't believe I'd actually been excited about Hairy Hooligan History lessons. Most Viking traditions involve a lot of mead swilling, axe swinging, and insult slinging, which had never made sense to me anyway. My marks in Advanced Rudery were dismal, and Frightening Foreigners was even worse. But I was clever, and articulate, and smart. Telling Tales—"and what's history but one very long, very detailed tale?"—should have been a time for me to shine.

Except the first day we'd started talking about Hiccup the Dragon Master and we hadn't stopped since.

Now, for anyone else, this was not a problem at all. A lot of our culture was based on raising dragons, training dragons, riding dragons, and Hiccup the Dragon Master was the first to do it. He was the greatest Viking Hero to date, the first to tame the skies. He'd brought down fleets, armadas, with his dragon Terror, the last of the Night Furies—the unholy offspring of lightning and death itself, a midnight black dragon the size of a house. Hiccup the Dragon Master had stood six feet tall with shoulders as wide as a tree, a beard as terrible and red as the last drops of lifeblood seeping from a mortal wound, and a voice capable of commanding even the most reluctant of dragons, striking through their resistance like thunder. It was said that, when Hiccup Horrendous Haddock spoke, the winds themselves obeyed.

When I was little, I'd loved the tales of Hiccup the Dragon Master. They were my favorite bedtime stories, because the stories were about me, my past, my family, my name. It wasn't until I turned ten myself that I really understood what that meant, because I am absolutely nothing like my heroic ancestor and namesake, and I was never, ever allowed to forget it. Hiccup the Dragon Master was a far cry from Hiccup the Useless.

I should have seen this coming, really. No, we couldn't talk about, oh, Bork the Bold, who started studying the dragons when we were still at war with them, or Alvin the Redeemed, who had founded the Meathead tribe, or Agar the Scream, who'd been the first Viking to train a Whispering Deathâ€"no, of course not. Because that would have been easy for me.

Old Wrinkly slammed his hands together for emphasis and I jumped. Luckily, so did everyone else. Toothless snapped awake and started scratching at my vest, looking for treats. "A burst of fire appeared over the monster's right eye, and Hiccup appeared, as if born from smoke and dragon fire himself!" Oh, they'd already gotten to that part of the story?

"Toothless hungry,"_ he whined. "Fish, want fish. Give Toothless fish!"_ I scratched at his jaw, avoiding his mouth.

"Hush, I don't have any right now,"_ I whispered back, which Toothless did not approve of. He hissed at me, wordlessly this time, and snapped again at my fingers. This time, I wasn't quite so lucky, and his very sharp gums and very strong jaw caught my thumb. I yelped, trying to dislodge him and only succeeding in drawing attention to myself. Startled by the noise, Old Wrinkly leapt to his feet, his horned helmet clattering to the ground and adding to the din. All the other boys burst out laughing as I tried to shake my stubborn dragon loose. Only Fishlegs scrambled to help me, tugging on Toothless until he let go, then disappeared into the rafters, muttering sulkily about strikes and appreciation under his breath.

"See, what did I tell you?" Snotlout said. A sneer twisted his lips, and Fireworm, his beautiful Monstrous Nightmare, chortled behind him. "He's so Useless he can't even listen to a story properly, let alone train a dragon!"

Shame burned like fire in the back of my throat and the corners of my eyes, and I wondered if that's what it felt like to a dragon who was breathing fire. Probably not. There'd be more power, sitting strong and proud in the stomach and on the shoulders. I stood, pressing my shoulders back and putting my hands on my hips and glaring into the rafters. Toothless finally got that I wasn't in the mood and went quiet, though the other boys hadn't stopped laughing.

"All right, lads, I think that's enough History for today," Old Wrinkly called, and they instantly dissolved into protests, whining for him to continue, he was at the best partâ€|_ I fixed my eyes on Toothless without flinching. Twelve was too old to play pretend, but I tried to imagine what the Dragon Master would do anyway. Pathetic, but it hardened my eyes enough that I didn't feel like crying anymore. Old Wrinkly was firm with the class, and insisted that I walk him back to his houseâ€" "My old bones could use the help."

Everyone cleared out pretty quickly after that, Snotlout still sniggering and sneering, but it still took my half an hour, the promise of three oysters, and the threat of leaving him behind in the cold, empty, lonely hall before Toothless ventured back down to perch on my helmet again. I followed my grandfather out of the hall in silence. He'd try to encourage me and mention his soothsaying again, I knew it. At the moment, I didn't want to be encouraged as much as I

wanted to sulk.

"Chin up, boy." Ha, knew it. "Why, Hiccup the Second had a slow start, tooâ€"

"Yeah," I interrupted, "for ten years, before he trained twin Monstrous Nightmares during his dragon training. At the same time."

"Well, I still say you're going to be the greatest hero Berk's ever seen," he said. Stubborn old goat. "It's in your blood, it's in your name, and it's in the signs. I soothsayed it myself. And yourâ€| Toothless Daydreamâ€|" Toothless trilled wordlessly, preening, then swooped down and nipped at my ear when I had nothing to say. "He's unique if nothing else."

I sighed. My grandfather had never given up on me, but he was wrong. I'd be the worst failure Berk would ever see, for the exact same three reasons he gave. "Thanks," I said anyway. "I'll see you tomorrow. The last few boats are due in, right?"

"No." The reply was meant to be ominous. "They've hit a storm, and it's going to take another week." I rolled my eyes, and turned towards my own house. Old Wrinkly's predictions never came true, but he persisted anyway. Maybe there was something to learn from that, but right now I just wanted to get home, get warm, and ignore everything for a bit. Maybe expand on How to Speak Dragonese, and start repairing some of the damage.

* * *

><p>My work of the night before was for nothing, though, as Toothless got it into his scaly little head to steal my notebook and I wasted the entire morning chasing him around most of the island. Lessons had been called off for the day in anticipation of the fleet's arrival, but it was still a pain. I'd hoped to have that morning to myself, not traipsing across the entirety of Berk after the most problematic, disobedient dragon I had ever seen. By the time I managed to bribe the menace back to ground level and reclaim my now-gummed work, the ships had not only returned to port but had also been unloaded.<p>

A crowd had gathered in the center square of the town, sending Toothless into an excited and interested frenzy on my shoulder. _"What that, what's that, what's that?"_ His claws dug into my skin, and even though I really just wanted to put my notebook away where it would be safe from terrorizing little dragons, I also knew I wouldn't get a moment's peace until his curiosity was satisfied. And, if I was entirely honest, I wanted to know what was going on, too. I headed towards the town square.

Everyone's size prevented me from seeing what was going on, but Fishlegs was lingering on the edge of the crowd, rocking onto tiptoe. Better to be in the same boat together, and Fishlegs tended to stick close to the village unless Gobber was dragging us out on one of his training exercises. I approached him. "Hey, Fishlegs."

He returned the greeting enthusiastically, grin so wide that his glasses were threatening to slide down the tip of his nose. He was smaller than I was, even, and had the worse luck of being asthmatic and allergic to reptiles. We'd bonded over a shared interest in

dragons beyond yelling at them, our shared adventures, and the shared honor of being the communal punching bags of our peers. He, too, was named after a great Viking hero he had nothing in common with, though ever since we discovered he was a berserker like Fishlegs the Wise, he'd felt a lot better about it.

"You're just in time," Fishlegs said. "You'll never guess what the fishing boats found!"

"What is it?"

"A dragon!"

I really didn't want to be interested, but I was anyway. "What? Really? How?"

"It's in the ice, too much to see easily, but Dogsbreath heard from Snotlout who overheard your dadâ€”they think it's a _Night Fury_!"

A chill ran down my spine. A Night Fury? An untamed, wild Night Fury, frozen in ice, and they were standing around talking in the middle of the village square? That thing was not going to be pleased when they got it out of the iceâ€”and there was no way they would listen to me when I said it was a bad idea. Because we were Vikings, and it was a dragon, and therefore we were going to train it. But stillâ€”| The Dragon Master's Terror had been the last Night Fury. This one must have been trapped in the ice for centuries, quite possibly longer than the seven generations between us. I'd give Endeavor itself to be able to talk to it. Would it even be capable of speech, like any of our dragons? Or was that something that had developed since the Dragon Master's time?

While I was thinking, Toothless had redoubled his efforts to see over the people around us, and was bouncing up and down on my helmet. _"What's a Night Fury? I want to see! Can I see? Can I eat one? Are they tasty?"_ I snatched at him, but he launched himself off my helmet and went soaring over the crowd until I lost sight of him. Great.

"HICCUP!"

Even better. Fishlegs and I winced in unison. That bellow could belong to no one but Stoick the Vast, chief of the Hairy Hooligan Tribe, and my father. Of course he'd be up next to the ice, and of course that's exactly where Toothless had ended up. I wriggled my way through the crowd, muttering apologies the whole way, until I could stand in front of my father. I still didn't come up to his waist.

He glowered down at me from above a tangled, bushy red beard, the intimidating sight only slightly diminished by the minuscule dragon perched on his helmet. "For the hundredth time, control your dragon!" I wanted to admit that it was a losing battle and that my dragon listened to no one but himself, but held my tongue. That wasn't something I liked admitting out loud to anyone but Fishlegs. Toothless returned to my shoulder without my having to say a thing. He'd always hated how loud my dad could get, though I could hardly blame him for that.

Stoick huffed, and turned back to the block of ice, speaking quietly with Gobber. Of course, to a Viking, speaking quietly just meant at a

loud enough volume to make your ears ring, rather than bleed. I rolled my eyes. If they were attempting to keep the discussion private, they were failing miserably.

"So you're saying you justâ€¦ found it?"

"Out on that iceberg! Yeah, it was just sitting there! Easy as anything to get it onto the boat. Do you really reckon it's a Night Fury?"

"Looks like the stories, don't it? Bit small, maybe it's a baby."

"But one hasn't been seen in ages!"

I wasn't listening anymore. I had experience tuning out my dad's voice, as he snored like no one else, and I was too busy thinking of something else, anyway. Sitting there, Gobber said. Really? They hadn't had to carve it out or anything? I sidled closer, keeping a close eye on both my dragon, so he wouldn't do something stupid and get us caught, and my father, so he wouldn't notice what I was doing. I examined the ice closely, looking for pick marks, or the uneven surface that would suggest melting the ice with dragon fire. It was smooth and even as a still lake, and I pressed my fingers to it hesitantly.

The ice was about twice as big around as Gobber, and about as tall as my dad. Tiny air bubbles swirled through it, suggesting the ice had formed quickly, if not instantly, and obscuring the dark shape within. I rubbed at the surface with my sleeve, trying to get a better view. It looked like a dragon of some sort, large and black and curled around something, almostâ€¦ protectively. Huh. The tail was about as long again as its body, and the fins were brought up until it almost touched the snout. And there was something off about itâ€¦

My shoulder suddenly felt a lot lighter, and I looked up to see Toothless scrabbling at the ice, only to disappear over the top. Oh, no. "Toothless! Get back here!"

"Nuh-uh, nope, Toothless was promised fish and Toothless didn't get fish and Toothless wants to know what Night Fury is."

I kept my voice down, not wanting to draw attention to the pair of us again. Dragonese wasn't exactly popular, no matter how useful it could be. _"It's a type of dragon. Now will you get down?"_

"Toothless saysâ€¦ no."

Oh, that lizard was trying my patience. I buried my face in my hands with a groan. Great. This couldn't possibly get any worse.

And then Toothless shot a small spurt of fire at the ice, scratched it once, twice, thrice with his clawsâ€¦ and it shattered.

I flung both arms up to shield my face and stumbled backwards. Toothless squawked indignantly and flew back to my shoulder, complaining about how the ice had shattered and he was convinced he'd hurt his claw, and only oysters could make it better. I ignored him,

because for once in my life the entire village had gone absolutely silent. Even my dad had taken a step back, and seemed to be holding his breath. It wasn't hard to see why.

In the middle of the village square, surrounded by shards of ice, was a Night Fury. My dad had been right when he pointed out that it was small, not even the size of Fireworm, and she wasn't yet fully grown. But it's size did nothing to detract from the sense of danger. Jet black and streamlined, the Night Fury was undeniably built for speed and the skies, with a pair of auxiliary fins just at the back of its wings. I couldn't estimate a wingspan because they were tightly wrapped around its body, but I was sure they were large.

Nobody moved. Nobody breathed. And the Night Fury opened its eyes.

I was wrong, which went to show what I know. Now things can't get any worse.

With clear intelligence, and without a sound, the dragon's green eyes traced the crowd, meeting every incredulous, terrified gaze. I couldn't move for awe. Finally, it came to a decision and warbled, tilting its head down to its chest as if checking for something. A croon this time, that sounded like relief, but still no words. And then, slowly, it unfurled its wings, and the gods proved they loved to play tricks on me because things got exponentially worse.

Clutched protectively in all four legs of the Night Fury was a lanky fishbone of a boy.

* * *

><p>So I decided to just add on the rewrite to what's already been posted, rather than take everything down and start from scratch. I'll put up a notice on the first chapter, asking people to skip ahead to the third. If you read through this chapter, I'm sure you've picked up several notes of description and bits of dialogue that are the same. This was done on purpose. The story is going to be the exact same thing it was before, I've just made some adjustments to the narrative style (the most obvious one switching from third person to first person) to make it easier to read. I am entirely certain that this will help me tell the story better than floundering with what I had.

**I'm posting another chapter today, as well, to make up for the fact that this is functionally the same chapter as the first post.
**

4. Chapter 2

**See end of chapter for notes. **

* * *

><p>300 years ago... **

* * *

><p>Two months since Dagur the Deranged's last attack and ultimate

demise, things had settled into a routine of sorts on Berk. Ruffnut and Tuffnut had lasted a week before destroying the roof of the Meade Hall in an incident involving a flaming yak, a catapult, and a load of half-rotten eelsâ€"don't ask, it hardly needs elaboration. Snotlout was already spreading the story of how he had singlehandedly fought off twenty Berserkers, conveniently saving the chief's heir at the same time. Fishlegs and Meatlug disappeared most days into the woods, cataloguing high altitude mountain wild flowers that no one could reach without the help of a dragon who was particularly good at hovering. Astrid took the opportunity to perfect her axe throwing, not that it could really get any better.<p>

And as for me? Well, after the help Alvin had given us against the Berserkers, Dad had offered him the option of rejoining the tribe. He'd declined, insisting that he preferred being in charge of his own group. The Outcasts had become the Meatheads, and Dad had "strongly suggested" (read as: politely ordered) that I help our new allies with their dragon training. I'd been spending most of my days with Alvin, helping him relocate to a closer island and teaching him the fundamentals of dragon training. It was weirdâ€"okay, it was down right freakyâ€"how easily I'd been given respect by the former Outcasts. It was a lot different from just the Dragon Academy, where the twins couldn't be instructed so much as "pointed in the direction of whatever I needed blown up" and Snotlout constantly questioned my authority. Though I had defeated every scheme and stratagem that Alvin's cunning could come up with in the last year. I suppose that had earned their respect, somehow.

Typical Vikings. Beat them over the head often enough and then they'll listen to you, but Odin forbid you use actual sense.

I sighed, and then coughed and spluttered as I promptly swallowed a bug. Toothless tilted his head back up towards me, as if to make sure I was okay. I patted the side of his neck in reassurance, explaining once I had stopped coughing. "I'm good, bud. Just swallowed a bug." Toothless laughed and I scowled. "Well, sorry, humans don't usually eat insects." I really needed to figure out a way to cover my face while I was flying. Too many bugs in the short summers of Berk, way too cold in the winter, the wind chillâ€" Yeah, I needed something protective, like a helmet. Hm, now there was an idea. In the meantime, I bent over Toothless's back, keeping my head down. With the Meatheads organized ahead of schedule, it was the first time we'd had some time for free flying in ages. We'd taken the opportunity to head west, into uncharted waters.

"It's been way too long," I murmured. Toothless crooned agreement, and I grinned. My friends were great, and it was great to actually have friends, but sometimes I just wanted it to go back to just the two of us, challenging ourselves to go ever higher, ever farther. Those days in the cove were some of the happiest in my life, just because it was the first time I'd really been happy enough to know the difference. I shook my head, reaching out and patting the Toothless's cheek. At least we had some time now, since organizing the Meatheads had happened a lot more quickly. I was at least two days ahead of schedule, which meant that even though our territories were now a day's sail apart (four hours as the dragon flies), I was taking the scenic route. We'd have to go back eventually, but right now it was just us, a boy and a dragon, going who knows where.

Which was about the point I realized I had no idea where we

were.

"Oh, man. I really need to start keeping track of all this," I muttered, scanning the ocean below me for some sort of familiar landmark. We were still going west, so I only needed to turn around and head east to get home, but it would still be nice to have a better idea than that. Besides, it was getting a bit chilly—high speeds and higher altitudes had a way of cutting through a tunic. Another thing to work on. "Let me know if you see somewhere to touch down, yeah?"

Toothless lurched under me, dislodging me briefly before I resettled, clicking my prosthetic into a better position. "Okay, Toothless, you know best," I laughed again, leaning back over his neck. He laughed, almost as if to say *I always do*, and dived downwards.

Five minutes later, we had landed on an island I had definitely never seen before. Most of the islands throughout this stretch of the ocean had rocky soil barely able to support a handful of scraggly conifers, with rare patches of tough seagrass and even rarer patches of the far softer "dragon nip." This island, though, was made of rolling hills and large, broadleaf forests. I swung off Toothless's back, stretching to work the kinks out of my own spine. "Let's rest for a bit, bud, and then we can go fishing and have lunch." Toothless shook himself from his ear fins down to his tail, sending the saddle connections rattling. "Hey, hey, careful with that!" I protested even as he settled himself down to rest. I groaned, but knelt down beside him to remove the sacks that carried our supplies and check over the buckles and straps of the saddle. Everything was still in perfect condition, though the leather was beginning to get a bit worn under his legs. It'd be another few months before I needed to replace anything, barring some sort of incident. Though we did seem to attract those like no one else, so Odin only knew—eh, Odin and Loki. Sometimes I thought Loki had a greater hand in my life than any of the others, since as a whole it seemed like something the mischief maker would think up on one of his more meddlesome days. I mean, scrawny, outcast fishbone shoots down most feared dragon, makes friends with it, saves entire village—Yeah, the irony had Loki written all over it.

It took a tail fin upside the head for me to realize I was rambling out loud and interrupting Toothless's attempt at a cat nap. I stuck out my tongue. "Fine, Mr. Bossy," I complained, but shifted closer to his head so that I could reach my arms around his head, scratching in all his favorite places. It was only fair, after all, seeing as he'd been the one doing all the work. Once the 'unholy offspring of lightning and death itself' had relaxed into something more like a boneless cat, I stood and wandered off toward the more heavily wooded area.

Hey, new island to explore. If I did get in trouble (which was likely given my track record and the aforementioned god of tricks and mischief), Toothless was only a call away. And even if he was currently sunning himself and doing a remarkable job of looking completely harmless, he was also an extremely overprotective, plasma shooting dragon. I'd be fine. Besides, this looked like good Timberjack territory and I had yet to see one up close.

I wandered through the forest for a while, looking for signs of dragon activity. There was an odd claw mark (Nightmare) and footprint

(Nadder), but nothing particularly interesting. I was just considering climbing a tree to get a better view when the bushes behind my cracked, and Toothless came bounding up, nosing at my chest and back and limbs. I rolled my eyes. "Toothless, I'm fine. I just went on a walk. Nothing happened!" He snorted and growled lightly when I tried to back away. Clearly, he did not think highly of my ability to take care of myself.

Which, okay, given that the last time I'd taken a walk alone on an unknown island I ended up hanging by my foot from a tree— Still, it hurts a Viking's pride to have a babysitter.

Toothless finally found my state of not being hurt acceptable, and sat back on his haunches. I knew that look. "Fishing it is, then?" I asked, hooking my hand into one of the saddle's straps and swinging back onto his back. "I want to get a sketch of the coastline, too, before we leave," I told him. Toothless rumbled something in reply and took off at a run. I stayed as flat as I could against his back, trusting that he knew the way towards the ocean. Draconic senses. Dead useful things.

We came out of the forest a few meters from a cliff, and didn't slow down for a moment. Toothless threw himself off the cliff, and a scream of exhilaration tore its way out of my throat as we dove, mere feet from the side of the cliff, before Toothless's wings spread out to catch the air, snapping us upright so that we were parallel with the water, our speed kicking up waves. I laughed. I couldn't help it! Ever since our first real flight, the first time I'd fallen (and there had been many, many times since, most of them on purpose), and the first time we worked together, truly as a team, I'd been more at home in the air than on the ground.

Toothless yelped in brief warning, and I clicked my foot back so he could duck into the water more easily. We'd developed a system a long time ago, after the usual amount of trial and error: he gives me a verbal warning before going under, I tug his ear when I need to breathe. It wasn't always necessary, as Toothless hunted more like a hawk, catching fish that were near the surface, but sometimes he liked to play in the waves. I had long suspected it was to get me soaked, but it was fun for both of us either way.

Half an hour later we headed back to shore so I could eat my own lunch now that Toothless was full. I started tugging my shirt off before we had landed, which was probably a bad idea as it was up around my face when we touched down, and Toothless deliberately walked us into a low hanging branch to "help" with my dismount. (Don't trust a word he says otherwise—it was definitely on purpose.) I lost ten minutes chasing him for that stunt after I'd gotten my shirt off, then another half hour when he'd decided to pick up said shirt in his mouth. I finally got it back and we went about setting up a temporary camp.

No fire, since I only needed some jerky and traveler's bread for lunch and we wouldn't be staying for very long. I spread my clothes out to dry and changed into the spare trousers and tunic I'd brought with me. "Soaked with sea water and dragon slobber," I commented, making a face at Toothless as I poked my shirt. "My favorite way to do laundry." He huffed and ignored me, curling up to sun again. "Nope, no rest for the wicked," I insisted, prodding him to his feet. "I wanted to check that coastline, remember?" He growled

disagreement. "Which I'll do whether or not I'm in the air with you, lazy, so come on. You're not even that tired, I know you're not." He scoffed, rolling his eyes again, but let me climb on top of his back anyway. "And no more water dives, okay, bud? At least let me keep one set of dry clothes." He nodded, and then we were in the air again.

We flew around the island once, for general familiarity purposes, before repeating it far more slowly. I wanted to get the coastline as correct as I could, and paper and high speed flying never really went well together. I'd take bearings once we landed again, orient the paper properly and sketch in the cardinal directions. Maybe someday I could actually combine all these sketches into a proper map, especially now that Outcasts and Berserkers weren't going to be raiding our island any longer.

You know, thinking about it later, I would never have landed in this mess if I hadn't decided to draw a map.

A particular, rocky coastline was giving me more trouble than I expected. I'd glance up every once in a while, only to see I'd horribly misjudged the proportion of a rocky point, or the curve of the inlet next to it. I'd glance up again only to see I had been right the first time. I'd already had to switch to two new pages in my notebook, what with the charcoal smudges, and it was getting absolutely everywhere. Toothless was starting to get impatient with me, too, as I directed him to stay as still as possible over the island, looking out to sea. Maybe the view was wrong! Biting my lip, I turned the page upside down, and asked Toothless to fly out and turn around, so that I was over the sea instead. I was just about to start sketching again when half the point that was giving me so much trouble crumbled into the sea. I stared. Was the island really that unstable, for the coastline to be changing so suddenly? Toothless started growling beneath me, but I patted the side of his head in reassurance. Our supplies were left on the other side of the island, and we hadn't felt any earthquakes. We'd be fine.

And then the cliffside that had just crumbled into the sea reappeared. The basalt flowed out of the water and reattached itself to the island, cracks sealing as if they had never existed.

Toothless immediately turned east, starting to head back towards Berk. I protested. "Wait, no, bud! We have to find out what just happened!" He ignored me and continued flying. Clearly, he disagreed. "Toothless, that shouldn't have happened. I've never seen anything like that happen. Ever!" I emphasized this with a frantic wave of my arms, sitting up straight in the saddle. He growled and flicked his head to stare at me over his shoulder. He couldn't have been more clear if he was actually speaking! "yes, and that is exactly why we should not investigate." "No, that's exactly why we should," I insisted, tugging at the saddle in an effort to get him to turn around. "What if whatever is causing it spreads to Berk? We don't even know what happened, bud, come on! Where's your curiosity?" He gave me another look, and I remembered every time my dad informed me that my curiosity was going to get me killed. I scowled right back. "Please?"

Our argument was cut short as a beautiful, serpentine dragon broke the water beneath us, weaving through the waves like a needle through

cloth. I gaped, and Toothless growled again, going higher. We were already a hundred, two hundred feet up, and I could see the dragon (sea serpent?) clearly. It looked as if I could just reach out and touch it—which meant that it had to be absolutely massive. One of dad's long boats would fit its width, leaving room left over.

"By the nine worlds," I breathed. It was heading north, going towards our left. "Toothless, we've got to follow it. Come on." My seriousness seemed to change his mind, and he reluctantly followed after the thing, matching its pace.

After only a few hours, the ocean below us had turned to slate, and massive ice floes came into view. If this was its usual habitat, the silvery gray coloring of its scales would help it blend in. So what was it doing so much farther south? I leaned over Toothless's ears. "Think you can get us ahead of it, bud?" If dragons had eyebrows, he would have raised them. He shot us forward, my eyes watering with the speed and the cold, and didn't let up until we'd long since passed the serpent and came into view of an iceberg, touching down. I shivered, standing up in the pedals so that I could see as far as I could.

No serpent.

"You did that on purpose!" I accused, tugging on one of his ears. He looked at me innocently. "Toothless, come on! We need more information about that thing to take back to Berk. What if it's a threat?" Which it probably wasn't, since it made its home in the absolute furthest reaches of the north. I shivered again. To my right, a slab of ice detached itself from the rest and fell into the sea with a thunderous roar that shook the teeth in my skull. Toothless yelped and scrambled away from the ledge, clearly wanting to take off again.

But then the ice raised itself out of the water, glinting in the sunlight and sending thousands of rainbows cascading over the ice at my feet. It reattached itself to the wall, each small shard fitting exactly where it had been minutes before.

The massive serpent rounded the iceberg, and I put it together. "Toothless, that's that dragon is what's causing that," I whispered, watching even as Toothless started shaking his head and backing further away. I wasn't even sure it was a dragon, really. I'd never seen something that long, that serpentine before. A frill decorated its head, long antenna as thick around as my entire body flowing behind it, but I couldn't see its face. I wasn't sure if I wanted to see its face, to see it staring at me. I wondered what color its eyes were, or if it even had eyes. Maybe the antenna served to guide it. The skrilk conducted electrical impulses through the frills on its head and its wings. Maybe the frill here helped it sense water currents?

Toothless shrieked as the ice around us gave way with another cracking roar. He beat his wings, I clicked the lever and matched his every maneuver, but this time fate had not favored us. Ice rained around us, and I thought of the sea stacks off the coast of Raven's Point. We'd survived that, we could survive this! But the sea stacks didn't move, weren't falling through the air with us as well. Like a catapult shot, a piece of ice hit Toothless's left wing, sending us into an unplanned barrel roll. I didn't recover until we hit the

water beneath us, my breath driven from me with the cold and the dark and the impact. I floated free of the saddle, dazed and unable to focus. Toothless was way more with it than I was, and dragged me to his chest in a last ditch effort to protect me.

Just before his wings closed around me and I was left in darkness, I saw the serpent's face. And yeah, I was seconds away from a cold and watery death, and I probably should have been thinking about that, mourning my life, my lost chances, and so onâ€¦ but I wasn't.

Because the dragon did have eyes. Bright, ice blue eyes. And they looked at me, and they were wise, and I could have sworn they recognized me. Most remarkable of allâ€”and this was the thought I had as the world darkened to something deeper than Toothless's wingsâ€”that dragon knew I wasn't going to die today.

And I believed it.

* * *

><p>Yes, I'm treating both Riders of Berk and _Defenders of Berk _as canon. Hiccup's coming from a month or so after the season finale of _Defenders of Berk, _and well before the events of _How to Train Your Dragon 2. _There may still be spoilers for the second movie, though, considering I clearly can't help foreshadowing. **

**So that's how Hiccup got stuck in the ice in the first place. You all should appreciate me. Not only was the rewritten version of the first chapter almost a full thousand words longer, I also gave you a second chapter at the same time, to make up for the confusion of the rewrite in the first place. **

**I suppose this is where I beg for reviews, isn't it? Well, it would make me feel a lot better about it if you'd let me know if it worked, especially with this chapter, since this is actual new material. **

**Thank you all SO much for your patience. I told you the hiatus would be short! **

5. Chapter 3

See end of chapter for notes.

* * *

><p>Two minutes of silence passed. It was the longest I'd ever seen a group of Vikings be so quiet, but then again, this was a special occasion.<p>

"Gobber," Dad said from behind me with false cheer. Half of the crowd, myself included, jumped. "You know the most about dragons, don't you? Why don't you, ahâ€¦"

"Oh, no, no, you're the chief," Gobber insisted.

They both fell silent when the Night Fury growled, looking between

the boy in its arms and the men standing around it as if demanding why they had yet to help. The slit pupils widened as it looked between Gobber and Dad, and then it rocked sideways, resting the boy on the ground and easing its claws away from him. He nudged the boy closer to us, then took a few steps away.

I watched, barely able to believe what I was seeing. I wasn't sure which was more unsettling—the dragon's clear concern for its rider, or the equally clear intelligence and self awareness it had demonstrated. The Night Fury had recognized we were afraid of approaching it, but it needed us to care for the boy, so it had let go and backed away, even though it hadn't wanted to. The boy's safety had outweighed the dragon's own desires. Nothing outweighed a dragon's desires. They were selfish creatures as a rule, even Toothless, as comparatively harmless as he was, had told me again and again, never trust a dragon.

I needed to talk to Fishlegs about this.

My father finally remembered his position and took a few, careful steps forward. The Night Fury stepped back again, and Dad knelt, scooping the boy into his arms under the dragon's watchful eyes. It nodded once in—approval? Permission? I needed to see if I could talk to this dragon.

Dad straightened and shifted fully to chief mode, ordering a runner to go ahead of him to the healer's cabin, shouldering his way through the crowd, which whispered and craned their necks to follow the chief and the boy. They fell silent when the Night Fury passed by them, following in the chief's wake. (Even though there was nothing a dragon could do to heal a human, it wanted to be close—I really, really needed to talk to Fishlegs and the Night Fury.) I scurried after both of them, Toothless hiding his face down the back of my neck and muttering.

"Toothless doesn't like the Night Fury, it doesn't make sense, Toothless doesn't like it at all."

I rubbed lightly at his back. No, the Night Fury didn't make sense, but where it scared Toothless, I was more—intrigued. The first Night Fury seen in generations, and it didn't match what I knew about dragons, hardly at all.

A flash of red caught my eye, and I glanced down, only to see the Night Fury's tail swaying behind it. One of the fins was fake.

Now, vikings aren't necessarily superstitious. We've a healthy respect for the gods, and keep an eye out for omens and the like because if someone can control lightning you really don't want to piss him off if you can help it. And some people have a better relationship with them than others, but I'd never been one of them. I don't get visions, I don't see signs, I've never had a visitation—nothing. But I swear to you, when I saw that prosthetic, a chill ran down my spine and I knew, just knew, that Berk was in for a storm. Because there was only one Night Fury I'd ever heard of to have a fake fin, and that was the Dragon Master's Terror. It could be a coincidence, but coincidences like that just didn't happen. That was Terror. But that—couldn't be the Dragon Master. Could it?

Toothless nipped sharply at my ear when he decided I hadn't been paying his complaints enough attention, and snapped me out of my thoughts. _"Toothless wants oysters, to help heal his claws after he rescued the no-sense Night Fury,"_ he whined, and I plucked him off my shoulder, tucking him under my arm.

"Okay," I agreed reluctantly, and turned towards the rocky beach, away from the healer's hut. "Let's go get you oysters."
>I had a lot of thinking to do.<p>

I snagged Fishlegs on my way down to the beach, and he promised he'd meet me down there once he fetched Horrorcow from his house. He lasted a record three minutes before asking me about the Night Fury. "I mean you are so lucky, you were right up there when the ice broke! What was it like, why'd your dad go to the healer? Who was hurt? What did it look like, really?"

I pried another oyster open with my dagger, scooping the flesh out and throwing it for Toothless. "Well, seeing as it's Toothless's fault the ice broke in the first place," I said, poking around for another oyster. "Yep," I said, seeing Fishlegs's incredulous expression. "He was messing around on top of it when it broke. But that's not all. Fishlegs, the Night Fury was protecting someone. It was holding this boyâ€”maybe a few years older than you and me."

"Really?" I'd never seen his eyes get that wide, even through our near death experiences.

"Really. That's why Dad went to the healer's. The Night Fury didn't hurt anyone."

"Except this boy."

I was shaking my head before he even finished the suggestion. "There's no way that dragon would hurt him," I insisted. "Fishlegsâ€¦ It was weird." I kicked another oyster loose as I thought of how to phrase it. "The Night Fury was protecting him. I thinkâ€¦ I think he was only in the ice because he was protecting him," I admitted.

"Whoaâ€¦"

I nodded.

When the Green Death and Purple Death had washed up on our beaches during our final exam two years ago, almost all the dragons had fled, saving themselves and leaving us Vikings to deal with our own problems. The only ones that hadn't had belonged to us and our classmates, and it was only because we actually had a plan. (Or, well, I actually had a plan, and it depended on the dragons to work.) And when that plan had failed, even those dragons had left, except for Toothless. Toothless was the only dragon to ever show an instant of selflessness when he risked his own life to save me from the jaws of the Green Death, and I still didn't really understand why he had, especially since nothing had changed since. I still had to bribe and trick him into listening to me.

Never trust a dragonâ€¦

"I think that Night Fury is Terror," I finally said.

"What? Really?" Fishlegs's voice had gone unusually squeaky in excitement.

"Yeah. He has a fake tail fin, bright red."

"There's no way there's more than one Night Fury with a fake tail," Fishlegs said. "That's too much of a coincidence. It's gotta be Terror. But then, who's the boy?"

I shrugged. The only human Terror would go to such lengths to protect would be his rider, Hiccup Haddock. The boy clutched in the Night Fury's arms had been—well, scrawny was a generous word for it, and definitely too young to be the Dragon Chief. There was something more going on here, and I didn't have enough information. Not yet.

I tossed a third oyster to Toothless and stood, wiping my knife absently on my trousers. "I'm going to the healer's hut," I told Fishlegs. "I want to see if I can find out more about the Night Fury. Do you want to come with me?"

Fishlegs looked torn. "I don't know—Terror was pretty, well, terrifying. And it's a _Night Fury_. Doesn't that sound a little dangerous to you?"

"Okay." I hopped from one rock to another, making my way back towards the village. Fishlegs scrambled to catch up. I waited for him at the bottom of the hill with a grin. "I thought it was dangerous?" I teased him.

He rolled his eyes. "Yeah, but you're going to do it anyway."

"You know me so well."

* * *

><p>Usually, when I get caught by my father doing something I'm pretty certain I'm not supposed to be doing, it's a disaster. So when he and our healer, Rattlecaw, came out of the hut when I was only a few feet from the door, I winced and tried to think of some excuse.<p>

"Hiccup, there you are. I need someone to sit with the boy while Rattlecaw and I have a village meeting. Send a message if he wakes up." He took a step away, and then turned back. "The Night Fury is with him, but I'm sure you'll be fine." He nodded, and continued on, mumbling under his breath. Sure, throw your stick of a son in a room with an unknown dragon we both revered and feared. This was exactly what I had wanted, but still. The concern was touching.

"Come on, Fishlegs," I said instead, and waved us both inside. Toothless swooped up to the rafters, as was his habit, and Horrocow lumbered forward to fall asleep under a chair, as was her habit. Fishlegs sat in the chair, legs pulled up to his chest. I shut the door and inspected our guest. I would have expected him to be on the bed rather than the floor, but given that the Night Fury had insisted on curling up around him and the bed was a rickety, ancient contraption, it was probably for the best. The boy had been dried off and buried in blankets, his wet clothes hanging near the fire to dry

and currently replaced with a castoff tunic. Even with the dragon's heat, he was still shiveringâ€”though at least his lips weren't blue. Reddish brown hair, more freckles than I would have expected, and almost as much of a stick as I wasâ€”if this was Hiccup Haddock, I was a salmon. (But why else would _Terror_ protect him? What was going on?)

"Look at it this way, Fishlegs" I said, and the Night Fury perked his head up at my voice, looked me over, glanced towards Fishlegs, snorted, and settled again. He kept both eyes on us, pupil rounded now that his boy was being taken care of. "We're the smallest people in the village, so he won't be intimidated when he wakes up." The dragon made an odd barking or choking noise, and I glanced towards Fishlegs.

"I think," he said slowly, "that he just laughed."

"Huh." I approached the dragon slowly, taking each step only when I was certain it was okay with the last, and eventually sat cross-legged on the floor a few feet away from his face.

"Are you going to try speaking Dragonese?!" Fishlegs demanded. I didn't look at him, but he was obviously excited. Ever since I'd told him I'd been studying the dragons' language, he was fascinatedâ€”though not fascinated enough to learn himself, since it was technically banned. I still wasn't sure why.

"Fishlegs," I said with infinite patience. Again, the dragon glanced over my shoulder at Fishlegs, tilting his head to one side in something like confusion, or maybe curiosity. Huh. "He's the first Night Fury Vikings have seen in generations, even if he's not really Terror. Of course I'm going to try and talk to him."

"Do you think he'll even be able to speak Dragonese? I mean, he's been in the ice for ages, he might notâ€”"

"Fishlegsâ€”|"

"Oh. Right. I'm being quiet."

The dragon laughed again, and turned his attention back towards me. He still hadn't said anything, and I was beginning to doubt this would really work. Well, might as well try.

"Hello, there," I finally said. "You wouldn't happen to speak Dragonese, would you?" The Night Fury tilted his head to one side, one ear flap coming up. Definitely curiosity. "I'm guessing that's a no." Something that sounded like a cross between a croon and a warble came from him instead, and I sighed. "Well, so much for Dragonese."

"He wants to know why you sound weird," Toothless announced from the rafters, and the dragon looked up at him and warbled again. Toothless hissed down at him, raising his wings to make himself look bigger.

"Wait, you can understand him?" I asked, raising both arms for him to come down. He landed heavily on my helmet, first, before scrambling down my arm. He raised his wings at the Night Fury again, before scrambling under my tunic, poking his snout out. The Night

Fury watched this with wide eyes, and I started seriously doubting that this was the Terror from the stories, the one capable of destroying ten catapults with a single shot. The Night Fury crooned again, though it still hadn't bothered to raise his head from his paws.

"He's speaking Dragon," Toothless explained. "Just Dragon. Probably doesn't know Dragonese, the idiot."

"Hey, now, be nice."

"Toothless can call him whatever he wants, he can't understand Toothless!"

I sighed. Was it too much to ask that he behave, just for once?

"Um... What's going on?" Fishlegs asked, sounding rather nervous.

"He doesn't speak Dragonese, he just speaks Dragon. At least, according to Toothless..." At this, the Night Fury's head came up, ears pricked up curiously, staring at me. I froze, midway through gesturing to the dragon still tucked into my tunic. Slowly, the dragon stood, the boy still settled between his legs, before leaning forward enough to put his face right in my own. I gave a very adult and manly squeak, but he looked where my arm was pointing and nosed at Toothless's back through my tunic. My dragon quivered.

"Hiccup, what is he doing?" The dragon blinked, looked over my head at Fishlegs, and then returned his attention to me, sniffing lightly at my hair. I tried not to gag at the fishy breath. "Hiccup!"

Whatever was about to happen... didn't, because a soft groan from beneath the Night Fury's chest thoroughly distracted us all, and the dragon was instantly curled around the boy again, nudging at the his head.

"I... have no idea what just happened," I said before Fishlegs could start asking more questions. "But I think he's waking up." I stood, crossing my arms under Toothless to keep him comfortable, and took a few steps back.

Another groan from our visitor, and the Night Fury started wriggling, the tail knocking over at least one pot. "All right, bud, I'm up, I'm up..." The boy pushed himself upright so he was leaning against the dragon's side, and hid his face in his hands. "Well, this feels familiar. Why am I on the floor? Dad's going to _kill_ me..." He straightened, as if a thought had just occurred to him. "Wait, there's no way Dad found me..." ohhh no. Ohhh, no, we've got to get out of here, bud." He turned, taking stock of the situation, and saw us for the first time, and went almost white, if it weren't for his freckles.

I waved.

He scrambled to put himself between us and the Night Fury, who snagged him by the back of his tunic before he got very far and dragged him back between his legs with a squawk. "Toothless!"

My dragon poked his head out from under my tunic. _"Toothless? Toothless is Toothless, the no-sense stupid Night Fury isn't Toothless!"_ he complained. I scratched his horns as he came all the way out, crouching on one shoulder.

"Toothless, please don't make this worse."

The boy was staring at Toothless with wide eyes, and had stopped any attempts to get away and stand up. "Butâ€¦ Vikings," he said finally. "You're Vikings. And you don'tâ€¦ You don't hurt dragons?"

"Of course not!" Fishlegs protested, sounding insulted. "We're Vikings, we _train_ dragons!" The boy's mouth dropped open. The Night Fury took advantage of his shock to drag a blanket over his face, then plop his head down on his legs, still clearly not trusting the boy to not try to get up and walk away. "We haven't fought dragons for three hundred years!"

It took him a minute to struggle out from under the blanket, wrapping it around his shoulders when the Night Fury growled in disapproval. "What island am I on?" he finally asked. "And how did I miss this?"

"You're onâ€¦"

"Fishlegs," I interrupted quickly, and noticed how the boy glanced towards him in surprise. "I need you to do me a favor."

"What is it?"

"Go get my dad?" He nodded. "Butâ€¦ take a while doing it, okay?"

"Umâ€¦ okay," he agreed, and edged towards the door. "Good luck!" He fled, Horrocow waddling after him.

I crossed my arms, looking at the boy. "What's your name?" I finally asked.

He shook his head, and looked at the Night Fury again. "Rightâ€¦ Introductions. My name's Hiccup, and this is Toothless." He scratched lightly at the dragon's jaws, smiling slightly. "Could youâ€¦ tell me where I am?"

I swallowed. "Hiccup what?"

"Hiccup Haddock. Look, I really need to know where I amâ€¦ my dad's going to kill me if I don't get back soon, he's really been over protective lately."

I ignored him, chewing on my lip as I tried to decide what to do. Fishlegs would be back soon with my father, I probably had a little over half an hour. "Okayâ€¦ Hiccupâ€¦" It was weird using my name for someone else, but oh well. There was no way to do this gently, and I had toâ€¦ or we had to, but probably just meâ€¦ figure out a plan before my dad came back. "You're on Berk."

"What? No, that can't be right. I know every person in Berk, and you'reâ€¦" The Night Fury leaned up and nudged his shoulder,

narrowing his eyes when their eyes met. The dragon tilted his head in my direction, and Hiccup threw his hands into the air. "All right, all right, you win! Stubborn lizard."

"So you'll listen to me?" He still looked extremely skeptical, but he nodded. "Okay, good, because we don't really have a lot of time before my dad gets here. You're on Berk. And if you're Hiccup Haddock who rides a Night Fury, then we have a lot bigger problems than you're going to believe, because you're on Berk about three hundred years in the future."

Both of them stared at me, before the dragon huffed and lay his head down on the bed again. I knew exactly how insane that sounded, but it was the only thing that made any sense. We'd found Hiccup Haddock in the ice. It had to actually be him—the only person in the whole archipelago who wouldn't know the significance of the name would be the person who had it first.

"I'm—| what?" He sounded a bit dazed.

"You're Hiccup Haddock, Dragon Master, Dragon Chief, and hero of a lot of our stories. You're my ancestor. I'm named for you—"Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III. But it gets worse, because I guarantee almost no one else in the village is going to believe that you're actually the Dragon Master, even if you've got a Night Fury for a pet."

"Whoa, whoa, whoa—"what do you mean, I'm a hero? There's no way—" "

I sighed. "You fought the Red Death and killed it, losing only your leg in the process. You started the traditions of dragon training and founded an academy based on it. You chased off a Skrill, the first once seen in three generations. You found the treasure of Hamish the Elder. You defeated Dagur the Deranged and destroyed the Outcasts."

Hiccup drew a deep, shaky breath. "Okay, yeah, all that happened—"kind of—"the Outcasts weren't destroyed, they just signed a treaty again—" But—" how did you even... okay, slow down. Go back. Why wouldn't anyone believe I'm me?"

"Because Hiccup Haddock was six feet tall with shoulders the width of a tree and a voice capable of calling thunder down from the skies."

For the first time he looked insulted, if still skeptical. "You're kidding me."

"Afraid not," I said, and tried very, very hard not to sound bitter. "Hiccup means hero for a reason." I was unsuccessful.

He opened his mouth, clearly about to protest, but I could hear heavy footsteps approaching fast. I cursed, wishing there'd been a bit more time—"I needed to come up with a plan of some sort, but Fishlegs at least had gotten me enough time to throw the basics at him."

"Two more things," I said hurriedly. "We found you in a block of solid ice in the northern seas. It shattered when Toothless—"my dragon, I'll explain later—"started scratching at it. And my dad's

name is Stoick, too. Stoick the Vast, and he's chief."

Hiccup clearly wanted to ask more questions, and still didn't believe me, but my dad burst through the door before he could ask anymore questions or I could suggest any plan at all. Great. Just great.

"Well, boy, good to see you're awake!" Dad boomed enthusiastically, but stayed in the doorway. He was still clearly a bit nervous about the Night Fury. "Welcome to Berk!" Hiccup cast a panicked look in my direction, and I nodded, hoping he'd finally get the message. I told him I was telling the truth. "I'm Stoick, Chief of the Hairy Hooligans."

"Umâ€¦ th-thank you," he said, voice shaking, and I rolled my eyes. Yep, no way anyone else would believe him about being the Dragon Master. "Stoick theâ€¦ the Vast, right?"

Dad puffed his chest out in pride, and I raised an eyebrow. "My reputation precedes me, I see!" he rumbled. "What about you? I'm surprised I haven't heard of you," he said, eyeing the Night Fury beside the bed, who was watching him, pupils wide.

"I'm, erâ€¦" He paused, glanced at me again. "Hamish," he said after only a second's pause, and I raised my eyebrows. For once I wasn't having to come up with a plan to bail someone out of their own stupidity. "Sorry if this is an odd question, butâ€¦ what happened to me?"

"Ah, we were hoping you could tell us that," my dad admitted. "Gobber found you in the iceâ€¦"

"Gobber?" he asked, then scrambled when my dad frowned. "S-Sorry, an old friend of mine is named Gobberâ€¦"

"Mm. Well, Gobber found you and your Night Fury," he paused significantly, as if waiting for an explanation, but Hiccup just stared at him innocently. "Frozen solid, just sitting there."

"I'm sorry, I have no idea what happened," Hiccup insisted. I bit my lip against a grin, and he glanced at me, almost grinning as well.

"Oh, right, Hiccupâ€¦" Dad started, and I straightened, noting that Hiccup did as well. I had to bite down on another laugh when even the Night Fury's ears twitched up. And my dad didn't even notice. "I think Fishlegs was looking for you. Why don't you andâ€¦ Toothless, wasn't it? Why don't you goâ€¦ play."

I nodded. "Sure thing, Dad. But could I come back and talk to Hamish later?" Hiccup gave me another look that just screamed _I know you're actually laughing at me._ I grinned.

"We'll see."

I bolted before I could laugh and give up the game. Bouncing down the front stairs, I snagged Fishlegs by the arm, unable to stop grinning. "We're going back to the beach. You're not going to believe this."

* * *

><p>AN: So I'm going to take a stab at a once-a-week update schedule... Given that not all of this is written, we'll see how that goes. OTL **

**A few things. First, I know some people were expecting/hoping for Hiccup I to be from around the time of the second movie. As much as I love the second movie and the way Hiccup has clearly developed as a character, I felt like the younger him would fit better with this plot, and would be a greater contrast to the ridiculous image of the Dragon Master that's been developed over the last three hundred years.
>

**Second, no, unfortunately Toothless the Night Fury cannot speak Dragonese. (WORD GEEKERY AHEAD.) I have definite reasons for that, mostly considering the differences languages develop as they are used every day by people, because I'm an English geek and fascinated by the way words work... In all honesty, with three hundred years between them, Hiccup I should be speaking weirdly, too-think Shakespeare's version of English abruptly transported to modern day. Sentence structure and pronunciation would be extremely different than what we are used to, and don't get me started on slang. Ah, slang... But I didn't do that because it made it unnecessarily complicated and because it really didn't _feel _right. (Please take a moment to imagine movie!Hiccup speaking like a Shakespearean actor and you'll hopefully get my point.) As for the Dragonese bit, if you look at the books the language is like a garbled form of excessively rude baby talk. My theory for its development is that, over the last three hundred odd years of dragons living in close quarters with humans, they've developed a dialect exclusively for use around humans, using approximate words and noises from the local human language. There's a "base code" sort of language dragons know instinctively (like they seem to instinctively know Dragonese, judging by book!Toothless's ability to speak it right out of the egg) called "Dragon" that consists of more animalistic sounds-this is what movie!Toothless will be using. Book!Toothless will act as translator, when he feels like it. **

**Third, and finally-I know exactly how unrealistic it is for someone who has been trapped in ice for centuries to actually survive this, let alone come out of it that easily and with only slight-to-moderate hypothermia. To fully explain my reasoning would involve rather important spoilers, so I only ask you to trust me for the moment. I (mostly) know what I'm doing. **

**And again, here is where I ask for reviews! I'm actually pretty pleased with this chapter, over all. I hope you all agree. Please tell me what you think! **

End
file.